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Social Media's Impact on Political Engagement: PSI Convention Live Stream

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Abstract

The presence of the internet and social media has fundamentally changed various human activities, including politics. This study investigates the political engagement strategies of the Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (PSI) through the utilization of social media, with a specific focus on the live streaming program of regional candidate conventions on the YouTube platform. The research examines the impact of PSI's social media initiatives, aiming to involve the public in the selection of regional leaders in Tangerang Selatan and Surabaya. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study analyzes public responses to PSI's YouTube videos and comments, considering factors such as viewership and engagement. Despite the significant potential for online engagement due to Indonesia's extensive internet user base, PSI's failure to formulate a compelling narrative and provide mechanisms for active public participation resulted in limited political engagement. The study reveals that while the convention program aimed to draw media attention and project transparency, it fell short of fostering robust political engagement, emphasizing the need for more inclusive and innovative approaches to political communication in the digital age.

Keywords

Social media, political engagement, PSI, regional candidate convention, live streaming program

1. Introduction

The development of communication technology has permeated human life. Since the evolution of communication technology marked by changes in global technology infrastructure,

the communication patterns of humans have undergone significant changes. Moreover, the transformation of communication technology based on the microelectronics revolution in the 1950s has given birth to a new technological paradigm characterized by the information age (Castells, 2013). One of the developments in communication technology in this information age is the emergence of new media, which later gave birth to social media.

The presence of the internet and social media has fundamentally changed various human activities, including politics (Criado et al., 2013). Their presence has altered the modes of message delivery and reception and the very structure of politics itself. In such a new environment, a citizen no longer passively receives political information. With the abundance of message dissemination channels, they have become active citizens. Through social media, political information is consumed, reproduced, and distributed.

Today, social media has become a political communication element whose role goes beyond political parties and citizens (Farkas & Bene, 2021). Before the advent of social media, political actors had to use conventional media, such as television and print media, to ensure that their messages, whether in the form of political programs, statements, or campaigns, reached the public. However, in the era of social media, political actors can use these platforms for both campaigning and promoting public engagement with their political programs.

The use of social media as a campaign tool has proven to be quite effective in several countries. The most notable example is, of course, Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 United States presidential election. Obama's victory is an extreme example of how social media played a crucial role as the primary campaign tool on the global political stage. His victory marked a pivotal point in the modernization of political campaigns. While his opponents still relied on mainstream media to gain public sympathy, Obama and his successful team effectively used the internet and social media for fundraising, organizing citizens, and mobilizing voters.

Obama's experience marked the first successful use of social media as the primary campaign platform capable of engaging voters and translating it into real support. Interestingly, the effort to engage the public was not carried out through top-down political marketing patterns. Social media was used not only to convey messages but, more importantly, to encourage the public, especially young people, to form communities that could effectively disseminate campaign messages.

In Indonesia, the presence of social media has proven to mobilize social solidarity among the Indonesian population. This can be seen in cases such as the Coins for Prita or *Koin untuk Prita* (Okezone, 2009), which rallied support for the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or KPK) when it was criminalized by the police. This experience clearly demonstrates the significant role of social media in promoting broader public engagement.

In the field of politics, the use of social media as the primary tool for political campaigns began to emerge in the 2009 general elections. Political parties and candidates began to consider social media to interact with their constituents, including promoting their products. Even before the legislative elections, political parties actively created accounts to campaign for their parties and candidates. However, at that time, the use of social media by political parties was merely a formality and had not yet become the primary campaign tool for parties.

However, in 2012, during the Jakarta gubernatorial election, there was a turning point for political actors in seeing social media as the primary campaign tool. This was due to the victory of Joko Widodo – Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Jokowi-Ahok) in the Jakarta gubernatorial election, defeating incumbent Fauzi Bowo – Nachrowi Ramli, who was supported by most political parties in Jakarta. The convincing victory of Jokowi-Ahok in the two rounds of the 2012 Jakarta gubernatorial election was unexpected by observers and political consultants. Their victory marked a significant chapter in the development of political marketing in Indonesia. The use of social media gave rise to mix-mediated political marketing (Utomo, 2013).

In the 2014 and 2019 elections, the extensive use of social media as the primary campaign tool by political parties became more prevalent. Not only did they activate official party social media accounts, but several politicians also simultaneously created their social media accounts and actively engaged with the public through social networks. Furthermore, social media users in Indonesia also experienced significant growth. According to a survey by the Association of Internet Service Providers in Indonesia (APJII) in 2018, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 117.17 million or 64.8 percent of the total population of 264.26 million. Internet users in Indonesia were predominantly aged 15-19 years (91 percent), 20-24 years (88.5 percent), and 25-29 years (82.7 percent). The survey also indicated that 19.1 percent of internet users in Indonesia used the internet for social media. The most widely used social media platforms were Facebook (50.7 percent), Instagram (17.8 percent), and YouTube (15.1 percent) (Fakhurozi et al., 2020; Febriani, 2020).

The Indonesian Solidarity Party (*Partai Solidaritas Indonesia* or PSI) has recognized the potential of young people as the voter base in elections since its inception. Therefore, from the outset, the party declared itself as a youth-oriented party and maximally utilized social media as a campaign tool. The use of social media as a campaign tool by PSI was notably successful in several regions in Indonesia.

As a newcomer in the simultaneous 2019 elections, PSI failed in entering the Indonesian Parliament because it failed to meet the parliamentary threshold of 4 percent, as stipulated in Law Number 7 of 2017. According to the recapitulation results of the KPU as stated in Decision Number 135/PL/KPU/V/2019 regarding the Determination of the President and Vice President, DPR RI, and Regional Representative Council Members in 2019, PSI received only 2,650,361 votes or 1.89 percent of the national vote.

Although PSI failed to secure seats in the national parliament, it successfully placed its representatives in the regional legislative councils of several provinces and municipalities. In fact, in the Jakarta Province, PSI managed to rank among the top four political parties with the highest vote count. According to the results of the Jakarta Regional KPU on August 12, 2019, PSI received a total of 404,508 votes and secured eight seats in the Jakarta Provincial legislative, thereby achieving the status of a parliamentary faction. Grace Natalie, representing Constituency 3 in DKI Jakarta, which covers North Jakarta, West Jakarta, and Kepulauan Seribu, received a total of 179,949 votes. This was well above the vote count of other candidates who successfully secured seats. Similarly, Tsamara Amany Alatas, representing Constituency 2 in Jakarta, which includes South Jakarta and Overseas, received the second-highest number of votes among all candidates in that constituency. Tsamara Amany Alatas received a total of 103,599 votes, only trailing behind the PKS candidate Hidayat Nur Wahid, who received 248,205 votes.

PSI's success in garnering significant votes in the Jakarta Province during the 2019 simultaneous elections was a remarkable phenomenon. They managed to outperform traditional parties that had placed their representatives in the Jakarta Provincial legislative in previous periods, such as the PPP party with only one seat, Golkar with six seats, PKB with six seats, and the Hanura party, which failed to secure seats in the Jakarta Provincial legislative. This success can be attributed to PSI's media coverage strategy in online media and the active engagement of PSI's leaders and spokespersons on social media platforms.

The study aims to explore how social media has influenced political engagement and played a significant role in PSI's success in regional legislative councils, particularly in Jakarta. Through an analysis of PSI's media strategies and leaders' engagement on social media platforms, this research endeavors to shed light on the evolving landscape of political marketing in Indonesia and the role of social media in mobilizing voters and promoting public engagement.

2. Research Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach. Nawawi and Hadari (1995) explained that qualitative descriptive research is a study that describes or portrays the research object based on visible facts or as they are. Meanwhile, according to Sugiyono (2010), qualitative research places the researcher as the key instrument, data collection techniques are conducted in a combined manner, and data analysis is inductive. In this context, the researcher will describe how PSI utilizes social media, especially YouTube, in the program of regional candidate conventions held in Tangerang Selatan and Surabaya.

Since this study focuses on social media, the data will be sourced from PSI's official social media accounts, specifically the YouTube official account. Data collection will involve gathering all videos related to the regional candidate conventions conducted by PSI in two cities, Tangerang Selatan, and Surabaya. From this data, the researcher will examine public responses to these videos, both in terms of the number of viewers and comments. This data will be analyzed to find answers to the main research questions. The analysis will be supported by conducting interviews with communication and social media experts.

The aim of this research is to describe and analyze the political engagement of PSI on social media through the program of regional candidate conventions broadcasted live on the YouTube social media platform. The benefit of this research is to enrich the intellectual discourse regarding the use of the official YouTube account to achieve political engagement, involving the public in choosing regional leaders in Tangerang Selatan and Surabaya.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Theory of Symbolic Convergence

The Symbolic Convergence Theory, developed by Bormann (1996), was inspired by Bales' research on communication in small groups in the 1950s, which initially focused on the behavior of group members. However, in his research, Bales discovered another reality, namely, the tendency of group members to become dramatic and share stories when experiencing tension. According to Venus (2007), these stories include jokes, narratives, rituals, metaphors, or wordplay, all of which play a significant role in reducing group tension and even enhancing group

solidarity. Robert Bales referred to this phenomenon as Fantasy Theme, which emerges when individuals become tense, dramatic, and share stories.

Bormann (1996) further developed these findings into the rhetorical actions within a broader society. From this development, Bormann subsequently formulated the Symbolic Convergence Theory. Bormann stated that the main principle of the Symbolic Convergence Theory is that “Sharing group fantasies creates symbolic convergence”. Bormann explained that the theory of symbolic convergence is built on a narrative paradigm, where he believed that humans are Homo Narrans, creatures that exchange stories or narratives that depict their experiences and social realities. Venus (2007) explained that Homo Narrans is based on the fundamental principle that humans are “social storytellers” who share fantasies, shape group consciousness, and create social reality. The Symbolic Convergence Theory emphasizes that group solidarity and cohesiveness can be achieved through shared skills in reading and interpreting signs, codes, and cultural texts, ultimately leading to the formation of a shared reality.

Bormann coined the method used to operate his theory as Fantasy Theme Analysis (FTA), with the concept of “fantasy” being a keyword in this theory, encompassing crucial terms such as Fantasy Theme (the message content aiming to evoke a chain of fantasies that create group culture), Fantasy Chain (the formation of a chain of fantasies through dramatized messages and shared intensities), Fantasy Type (repeatedly discussed fantasy themes in various situations with similar narrative frameworks but different characters and settings), and Rhetorical Visions (a composite drama uniting large groups of people into a common symbolic reality) (Suryadi, 2010).

In addition to the four key concepts mentioned above, Bormann also explains that in every fantasy analysis, there are always the following fundamental elements: First, the characters involved (dramatic personae or characters). Second, the plotline. Third, the scene or setting. Fourth, the agents who determine the truth of the story (sanctioning agents). These four elements are referred to by Bormann as dramatist structural elements.

3.2 Social Media and Political Campaigns

The use of social media in political activities has been widely adopted in various countries. In Indonesia, the use of social media was maximized in the 2009 election and continued in the 2014 and 2019 elections. In political activities, every candidate and political party makes various efforts to gain support in achieving their political goals. For this purpose, communication and information tools are required. Social media, as one of the information tools, is extensively utilized by people nowadays. Social media provides four benefits for the political activities of a party or candidate, which are information, service, access to political power and space.

Hagar (2014) mentioned that social media can contribute to political success. This is because social media allows candidates in an election to interact with potential voters on a scale and intensity that cannot be achieved through traditional campaign methods such as door-to-door campaigning, brochures, or even coverage by print and television media. Additionally, the cost of social media campaigns is much lower because there are no direct costs associated with social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Social media also excels in providing an opportunity for two-way dialogue between candidates and potential voters, unlike traditional campaign models that tend to be one-way, from the candidate to the potential voter. The nature

of political communication between candidates and potential voters can be multi-directional, such as from the candidate to the voter, the voter to the candidate, or among voters (Morissan, 2014).

According to Tanase (2015), this multi-directional communication capability is one of the assets for a candidate to secure votes in an election. Tanase further argues that the chances of gaining support through social media in an election are higher if there is active involvement or participation by potential voters. This active participation does not necessarily have to take place on the candidate's social media account. Supporters of the candidate may disseminate campaign materials from the candidate's account, but with personalized messages that stimulate discussions with their friends in the virtual world. In other words, this activity is more important than the number of people who become "followers" on a social media account.

Tasente also states that online support does not stand alone. The success of a campaign on social media does not automatically lead to victory in an election. Social media campaigns should also be complemented by triangulation of campaign methods. This means that an active social media campaign should be accompanied by face-to-face campaigns or other traditional campaign methods. This is because research in several countries has shown that a significant campaign budget often dominates the level of electability more than social media (Tānase, 2015).

There are several social media platforms that can be utilized to support political campaign activities, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Each platform has its own advantages. According to Ardha (2014), the use of Facebook to influence public opinion is commonly done openly, so profiles should be as open as possible (Ardha, 2014). Photos and videos can be added to profiles, and while there are no clear limitations on the type of images that can be used, they should be appropriate. Essentially, Facebook is a virtual circle of friends: you chat there with your old friends and meet new people. The most common way of communication is by giving comments or pressing the "like" button, or reading and responding to private messages sent by other users. If requested, Facebook can also notify users about new comments via email so they can follow the conversation's progress even when not logged into the site.

On the other hand, Twitter is a microblogging service where users can send and read updates from one another. Since its inception, Twitter has been based on short messages, limited to 160 characters (a "tweet"), where text should be concise and engaging. One of Twitter's most well-known features is hashtags, indicated by the # symbol. Hashtags are how Twitter indicates keywords, and through them, users can follow specific themes or events: clicking on a hashtag allows users to see all tweets related to that topic. In this way, all messages relevant to an election campaign can be easily read by every Twitter user.

As for YouTube, it plays a crucial role in campaign work because a candidate can use video messages to promote themselves without expensive TV ads. However, a campaign video should not be too long, as it's challenging to maintain engagement for more than two to three minutes. So, it's a good idea to create several short videos rather than one long video. Similarly, to add variety, filming debates or interviews, rather than just one person speaking to the camera, can be beneficial.

Furthermore, there are several characteristics of social media, including being interactive, digital, audience-generated, asynchronous, multimedia, and narrow casted. Interactivity is often understood as two-way communication, like interpersonal communication, when two people engage in a conversation. The term "interactive media" is often understood as media that

facilitates two-way communication. However, in reality, not many media truly achieve this two-way communication, as in interpersonal conversations where individuals not only respond alternately to each other but also modify their actions based on the feedback received. In this regard, interactivity can be defined as a system where feedback from message receivers is used by human or computer message senders to continuously modify the message when it is sent to the receivers.

4. Results and Discussion

Today, it is challenging to separate media and politics. Technological advancements in the era of globalization have brought about significant changes, especially with the emergence of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and news portals. As a result, people utilize these platforms for various purposes, including political campaign strategies. This is fundamentally driven by the effectiveness of reaching a wider audience and the cost-effectiveness compared to conventional media.

Political parties, legislative candidates, gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial candidates, and even presidential candidates harness social networking technology for their campaigns. With the advent of social media and the internet, the distance between constituents and political parties or politicians has virtually disappeared. Anyone can easily access the presence, statements, websites, and other communication tools of both political parties and politicians. Communication has become shorter, and mobilization has become easier. The role of social media has become immensely important, as it can significantly boost support and shape public opinion. The emergence of opinions can rapidly influence various aspects of political party activities. The abundance of statements can also influence voters in deciding who to choose.

It is this extensive use of social media that has been adopted by PSI since its inception. As a party that declared itself as a youth-oriented party and targeted young voters in the 2019 elections, PSI utilized social media as a tool to introduce itself to the public. They didn't stop at creating official accounts; PSI also activated all elements of the party to use social media actively. As a result, the public could easily get to know PSI through its members, who were also active on social media.

The number of followers on PSI's official social media accounts is relatively high, and even when compared to parties that passed the parliamentary threshold in the 2019 elections, PSI's social media account followership is among the highest.

Table 1. Party Followers in Indonesia

Party	Social Media Accounts			
	Twitter	Instagram	Facebook	YouTube
Gerindra	543.300	562.000	3.633.642	97.500
PSI	135.500	228.000	3.039.113	79.600
PKS	367.500	237.000	905.495	78.900
PDIP	221.100	213.000	1.568.885	4.640
Golkar	90.600	15.400	61.225	-
Nasdem	91.700	42.800	14.901	10,4
PKB	81.200	49.000	70.097	830

Based on Table 1, there are only four parties that are quite serious in managing their social media, namely Gerindra, PSI, PKS, and PDIP. Three of these parties have been around for quite some time, namely Gerindra, PDIP, and PKS, while PSI was established in 2014. Among all social media platforms, PSI appears to manage all its social media accounts well. Specifically for YouTube, PSI has only two main competitors, which are Gerindra and PKS, while other parties do not maximize their use of YouTube.

The large number of subscribers on PSI's YouTube channel seems to be utilized by PSI to broadcast the Conventional Regional Head Candidates 2020 program live on the YouTube platform. A similar program was previously conducted by PSI during the selection of prospective legislative candidates in the 2019 elections.

All stages of the Regional Head Candidate Convention 2020, held by PSI in two cities, Tangerang Selatan, and Surabaya, were broadcast on PSI's YouTube platform. There was a total of 19 videos about the Tangerang Selatan City 2020 Regional Head Candidate Convention process and 15 videos about the Surabaya City 2020 Regional Head Candidate Convention process.

Table 2. 2020 South Tangerang City Candidate Convention Video Viewership

Publication Date	Duration	Viewers	Like	Dislike	Comments
26-01-2020	30:20	655	104	1	5
26-01-2020	30:58	395	37	-	8
26-01-2020	31:19	393	34	-	6
26-01-2020	37:59	220	10	1	2
26-01-2020	34:04	489	21	1	6
26-01-2020	22:10	211	9	1	1
27-01-2020	31:47	320	10	-	10
27-01-2020	37:55	256	13	-	1
27-01-2020	29:31	362	23	-	5
28-01-2020	27:13	370	101	-	9
28-01-2020	29:20	105	5	-	1
28-01-2020	33:52	215	15	-	-
28-01-2020	30:46	219	14	-	4
28-01-2020	27:07	222	13	1	1
28-01-2020	31:00	219	15	-	-
29-01-2020	25:29	169	4	-	1
29-01-2020	22:39	157	7	-	3
29-01-2020	31:44	76	1	1	-
15-03-2020	02:22:20	1.193	49	5	9

According to Table 2, the number of viewers for the 2020 Tangerang Selatan City Regional Head Candidate Convention videos conducted by PSI, the average number of viewers is 280.7 viewers. The highest number of viewers was for the video uploaded on March 15, 2020, which contained a discussion with all the candidates participating in the convention. The lowest number of viewers was for the video published on January 29, 2020, which featured an interview with one of the candidates and was only viewed by 76 viewers. The average number of comments is 3 comments per video, with the highest number of comments being 10, and some videos received no comments.

Table 3. 2020 Surabaya City Candidate Convention Video Viewership

Publication Date	Duration	Viewers	Like	Dislike	Comments
29-01-2020	26:33	66	2	1	-
29-01-2020	27:04	98	7	-	-
29-01-2020	32:02	119	3	-	2
30-01-2020	30:19	219	14	-	5
31-01-2020	33:03	173	11	1	1
31-01-2020	32:58	147	6	2	-
31-01-2020	15:05	181	5	1	2
31-01-2020	29:45	91	1	-	-
31-01-2020	26:09	48	1	-	-
31-01-2020	25:00	85	4	-	-
31-01-2020	45:53	97	3	-	1
31-01-2020	37:26	99	6	-	-
29-03-2020	44:54	249	15	-	3
29-03-2020	21:34	168	12	1	1
29-03-2020	36:08	184	9	-	1

According to Table 3, the number of viewers for the 2020 Surabaya City Regional Head Candidate Convention videos conducted by PSI, the average number of viewers is 144.5 viewers. The highest number of viewers was 249, and the lowest number of viewers was 48. The average number of comments is 1 comment per video, with the highest number of comments being 5, and some videos received no comments.

The convention process conducted by PSI represents an innovation in political education. Through the convention broadcasted on YouTube, voters can learn about the track record, vision, mission, and programs that will be implemented if they become regional leaders. Furthermore, the involvement of non-party figures in the selection process is a progressive step, as political processes in political parties have always been outside the academic realm. Academics have never been involved in decision-making processes within political parties.

The use of social media in the convention process is also one of PSI's ways to embrace potential PSI voters. Since PSI's primary voters are young and first-time voters who frequently use social media, using social media to socialize convention programs with the hope of engaging the younger generation is an appropriate step. However, in terms of effectiveness in socializing the candidate who will be endorsed to voters in Tangerang Selatan or Surabaya, it may not be effective because viewers on social media come from various places. It is unclear whether the viewers are residents of Tangerang and Surabaya or if they are from other locations such as Jakarta.

Based on the collected data presented in Table 2 and 3, the live broadcasts of the 2020 Regional Head Convention process held by PSI failed to generate a significant response from the public. PSI failed in achieving public involvement and participation in the convention process. This can be seen from the low level of participation measured by the number of viewers and comments on each video. The low number of viewers and comments on each video does not correlate with the number of subscribers on PSI's official YouTube channel, which has reached 79,600 subscribers. The limited public response also hindered PSI's desire to maximize public participation in the convention process.

PSI's failure to achieve high public participation in the candidate selection convention program in Tangerang Selatan and Surabaya is because from the outset, PSI failed to formulate a fantasy theme that could bind the public. In their argument, PSI stated that the open selection of regional head candidates was a new breakthrough in Indonesia's political system. By conducting open selections, PSI had at least five assessment indicators: value, vision, professionalism, creativity, communication, and agent of change. Meanwhile, factors such as popularity and closeness to the community were also considerations in the selection process.

The convention is one of PSI's efforts to conduct open and transparent candidate selection for regional leaders and to eliminate the practice of political contributions. It has been an open secret in politics that political contributions play a role in the nomination of regional head candidates. There must be a serious commitment from political parties to ensure that the regional election (*Pemilihan Kepala Daerah* or Pilkada) contestation is conducted in a clean and transparent manner. Therefore, PSI introduced a candidate nomination mechanism for the 2020 Pilkada where there is no room for political contributions. This mechanism is the convention.

Conventions are not new in Indonesia's political system. In 2003, the Golkar Party had already held a Presidential Candidate Convention, which resulted in Wiranto winning and being nominated as the presidential candidate in the 2004 election, paired with KH. Sholahuddin Wahid. Furthermore, the Democratic Party also held a convention in 2013, although no winning candidate was announced, and convention participants were not nominated as presidential candidates in the 2014 election. Consequently, the public failed to grasp the significance of the convention process organized by PSI, which should have been a significant theme to garner public support.

The fantasy theme is considered the earliest element in forming other fantasies. The fantasy that is constructed and shared by a group emerges from the merging of meanings that generate compatibility. The failure to formulate a fantasy theme also resulted in the PSI's inclusiveness message failing to create a fantasy chain and, ultimately, failing to establish a symbolic reality or rhetoric visions.

PSI's failure to create a shared symbolic reality for the public ultimately led to the live-streamed convention program on social media, particularly on YouTube, receiving limited public response. Beyond that, from a technical perspective in using social media, this convention program also faced several fundamental issues. First, the convention program's live broadcast was monotonous as it primarily consisted of presentations of programs and question-and-answer sessions between candidates and panelists. There was no novelty in terms of content because viewers were presented with a discussion like discussions in classrooms or seminar rooms.

Second, the video duration aired was excessively long, averaging around 30 minutes per video, featuring candidate presentations and Q&A sessions with expert panels. This approach contradicted the preferences of YouTube viewers who generally do not favor lengthy videos, especially those lacking variety. Typically, YouTube content creators seek the best ideas for content with shorter durations. This is what PSI should have done when creating content related to the convention program. PSI could have edited the videos to showcase only the most engaging and attention-grabbing segments.

Third, there was a lack of interaction. Interaction is a key characteristic of social media and fosters participation. In the broadcasts of the Convention for Regional Head Candidates organized

by PSI, there appeared to be no effort to build interaction with the viewers. The absence of interaction channels between viewers and candidates gave the impression that the program was merely a form of “image-building,” portraying the party’s candidate selection process as transparent and accountable.

PSI’s failure to establish interaction in the 2020 Regional Head Candidates Convention program on social media was due to PSI’s lack of adaptation or misalignment with the platform. There was no distinction between watching a similar program on television and on YouTube. However, social media is inherently interactive and participatory. Therefore, the reviewer believes that PSI’s approach was ineffective in encouraging public participation in the political process.

This failure also resulted in the Convention organized by PSI and broadcasted on social media being unable to promote political engagement. Political engagement can be marked by public involvement in various forms, including providing input, support, and direct participation in the voting process (voters). First, in this convention, the public was not involved in casting votes to determine the most suitable candidate. Ultimately, the selection of candidates to be endorsed by PSI was decided by the PSI team in collaboration with expert panels based on assessments made during the selection process. Second, the public could not directly participate in the process of supporting or endorsing candidates. This support could take the form of direct participation at the convention venue, support on social media, or material support in the form of donations such as clothing, pins, or money. Public support for candidates had no channel within this convention. Third, the public could not express their aspirations directly to the candidates. Once again, the channel for conveying aspirations was not provided by PSI through social media platforms.

The involvement of the public through social media has been widely recognized as highly effective. For example, during the 2012 Jakarta gubernatorial election (Pilkada), the Jokowi-Ahok campaign effectively engaged the public through social media. In the case of PSI’s convention, questions arise regarding the extent of public engagement in the convention. For instance, to what extent were public inputs heard by the party and expert panels? How much influence did public opinion have in determining a candidate chosen by the party? Or was public involvement limited to providing suggestions, with the ultimate decisions still resting with the PSI Central Executive Board (DPP PSI)?

If political parties choose to use media as a tool to campaign for party programs and hope to achieve significant political engagement, they must consider several factors. First, live streaming programs on social media cannot simply be a transfer of television programs to social media. Social media is interactive and participatory, whereas television viewership is typically one-way. Television and YouTube viewers may have the option to accept or reject the broadcast, but YouTube viewers can be encouraged to participate more actively, making them feel ownership of the program. Second, social media users in Indonesia are concentrated on two major platforms, namely Facebook and WhatsApp. While data-intensive platforms like YouTube have not yet become the primary choice for social media users. Therefore, political parties should consider their platform choices, not limiting themselves to a single platform but opting for a multi-platform approach. Third, the nature of social media is participatory, so parties must think about how the public can be involved without compromising quality. For example, it should not be limited to panelists asking questions, as is common on TV; the public should also be able to ask questions.

Perhaps there could be a moderator to facilitate this. This would build public trust. Fourth, the live streaming model is effective mainly in urban areas but may not be as effective in rural areas. Therefore, political parties should adapt to bridge the potential gap between urban and rural areas. For instance, finding ways to reduce bandwidth requirements so that rural viewers can participate effectively.

5. Conclusion

The effort made by PSI to broadcast the 2020 Regional Head Candidate Convention program on the social media platform YouTube is indeed a new breakthrough in Indonesia. With a significant internet user base in Indonesia, there was a substantial potential for the program to be viewed by the public. However, due to PSI's failure to formulate a unifying fantasy theme that could resonate with the wider public and ultimately create a shared consciousness, PSI failed to achieve political engagement.

This failure was also influenced by PSI's convention method, which did not introduce anything new but simply transferred the platform from television to social media. Unfortunately, this transition was not accompanied by a clear plan for how the public would participate in the convention program. The public could only act as passive viewers of the broadcasts, without being able to participate more actively by supporting candidates, asking questions to candidates, or providing input. PSI also did not provide a forum for netizens to evaluate the programs and ideas of the candidate nominees.

Because there was no space for public participation and PSI's failure to formulate unifying themes/symbols, it can be argued that PSI's goal in this convention program was not to foster political engagement but rather to seek media recognition. The convention program was created primarily to draw attention from the media and shape public opinion that PSI is an open and transparent party.

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